US threat to impose economic sanctions on India

3629. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United States has warned India that it would impose economic sanctions on India from June this year if India fails to check trafficking of women and children;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware of the fact that if this happens, the Act mandates the US Government to vote against loans to India from international financial institutions like World Bank, Asian Development Bank and IMF;

(c) if so, the details of the economic sanctions threatened to be imposed and the precise trafficking scenario that forms the basis of such a threat; and

(d) the steps taken and being taken by Government to curb, control and prevent trafficking in women and children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MANIKRAO GAVIT): (a) to (c) As required by the United States' Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act, 2000, the US Department of State releases every year its report on 'Trafficking in Persons' in which countries are classified in three tiers. The classification is based on the situation of trafficking and the host Governments' efforts to improve the situation in each country. The Act mandates the US Government to suspend bilateral assistance and its support to multilateral assistance to countries classified under Tier 3. In the 'Trafficking in Persons 2004' report, India has been placed in Tier 2 Watch List.

(d) The details of steps taken and being taken to curb, control and prevent trafficking in women and children are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Steps taken and being taken to curb, control and prevent Trafficking in Women and Children

(a) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects. Therefore, primary responsibility of preventing and controlling trafficking in women

and children rests with the State Governments. However, the Ministry of Home Affairs has from time to time been advising the State Governments to take measures for the prevention of crime against women, children and other vulnerable sections of society including the measures to eliminate trafficking in women.

(b) The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) is a special law for combating trafficking and is supplemented by the Indian Penal Code, 1860. A National Plan of Action (1998) was drawn up and a Central Advisory Committee (CAC) constituted by the Department of Women & Child Development (DWCD) under the chairpersonship of Secretary (DWCD), to combat trafficking, rescue and rehabilitate victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, and activate legal and law enforcement systems to strengthen implementation of the ITPA. The Committee comprises of the respresentatives from more than 10 States, United Nations and bilateral agencies and voluntary sectors working on anti-trafficking measures as well as from other Ministries, including Ministry of Home Affairs. The CAC meets periodically to address the issues relating to trafficking in women and children.

(c) The Government of India has issued guidelines to the States for effective implementation of the Plan of Action. The DWCD regularly reviews State action.

(d) State Advisory Committees on Trafficking have been set up developing authority and seeking to mobilize greater State resources in the fight against trafficking.

(e) The DWCD is preparing manuals for the sensitisation of the Judiciary, Medico-legal Officers and the Police Personnel in dealing with the victims of trafficking, which are at the stage of finalisation. National consultations are being held in this regard.

(f) DWCD has requested the Ministry of Tourism to implement the Global Code of Ethics for tourism, which prohibits sexual exploitation of children for the purpose of sex tourism. In addition, the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and the Director General (Tourism) have also been requested to make it binding for the hotels, lodging/boarding houses to prominently display at the reception counter anti-trafficking messages and penal provisions against sexual exploitation.

(g) The DWCD has undertaken regional efforts, in alliance with NGOs, to creat greater awareness of the dimensions of trafficking and increase sensitivity to victims among Government departments, the police and judiciary, as well as within civil society at large.

(h) Some of the State Governments have enacted legislation to prohibit Devdasi and Jogin traditions of sexual exploitation.

(i) Based on National Human Right Commission's report about Action Research on Trafficking in Women and Children 2002-03, some of the State Governments have been requested to review the problem of trafficking with a view to evolving a comprehensive strategy for prevention, rescue and rehabilitation of victims of effectively deal with the same, sensitize/train police officials at all levels and to carry out special drives in the most vulnerable areas to ensure that besides securing the rescue of the victims the traffickers are brought to book and justice delivered expeditiously.

(j) A Working Group on Cross Border Trafficking of Women and Children was constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs to identify the transit points, routes, methodology, transport, funding, nexus between individuals and organised gangs and to suggest measures to prevent cross border trafficking. The Group recommended setting up of Organised Crime Units in affected States, posting of atleast one Deputy Superintendent of Police at the identified affected districts for the Organised Crime Units, systematic collection of information of cases of trafficking, institutionalization of a mechanism for regular reverse feedback to border agencies/ intelligence agencies/immigration authorities etc., through National Crime Records Bureau and strengthening, sensitization and training of border check posts. The recommendations of the Group along with a list of identified infiltration routes and touts have been sent to all the State Governments and Union Territories for taking necessary action for implementation of those recommendations.

Constitution of National Disaster Management Authority

3630. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have constituted a National Disaster Management Authority;